

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of claims

1. (currently amended) A method for sterilizing and producing a fish-paste product by utilizing ozone gas-containing microbubbles comprising the steps of:

adding the ozone gas-containing microbubbles generated in water to raw materials of a fish-paste product;

pestling the raw materials of the fish-paste product after the step of adding the ozone gas-containing microbubbles;

coating [[the]] interfaces of the ozone gas-containing microbubbles with tissues composed of the raw materials of the fish-paste product, the ~~raw materials~~ tissues including proteins and lipids contained in the fish-paste product, thereby maintaining the longevity of the ozone gas-containing microbubbles thereby creating coating shells composed of said tissues, said shells covering the ozone gas-containing microbubbles; and

giving stimulation to a part of the ozone gas-containing microbubbles thereby rupturing the coating shells of the ozone gas-containing microbubbles while said ozone gas-containing microbubbles are in the fish-paste product, thereby sterilizing the fish-paste product by the formation of active oxygen and free-radical species;

wherein the ozone gas-containing microbubbles have a diameter of 50 μm .

2. (cancelled)

3. (original) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the step of adding the ozone gas-containing microbubbles to raw materials of the fish-paste product comprises adding water containing the ozone gas-containing microbubbles.

4. (canceled)

5. (currently amended) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the step of adding the ozone gas-containing microbubbles to raw materials of the fish-paste product comprises spraying a mist of water containing the ozone gas-containing microbubbles.

6.- 8. (canceled)

9. (currently amended) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the stimulation comprises rubbing together raw materials of the fish-paste products at the [[time]] step of pestling of the raw materials.

10. (canceled)

11. (original) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the stimulation comprises high-frequency irradiation of raw materials of the fish-paste product.

12. (canceled)

13. (original) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the stimulation comprises microwave irradiation of raw materials of the fish-paste product.

14. (canceled)

15. (original) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the stimulation comprises heating raw materials of the fish-paste product.

16. (canceled)

17. (currently amended) A method according to Claim 1, ~~wherein in the step of giving stimulation to a part of the ozone gas-containing microbubbles is repeated~~ further comprising giving a secondary stimulation to a part of the ozone gas-containing microbubbles after

processing and packaging the fish-paste product, thereby further sterilizing the fish-paste product by the further formation of active oxygen and free-radical species.

18. (canceled)

19. (previously presented) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the step of giving stimulation to a part of the ozone gas-containing microbubbles does not rupture all of the ozone gas-containing microbubbles.

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